A LOVING SALUTATION

To all People who have any desires after the

Living GOD;

But especially to the

Free-Will-ANABAPTISTS.

From one that desires the Eternal good of all Souls.

I. BEEVAN.

FRIENDS,

AS I was meditating on the wayes and works of the Lord, I can truly say my meditation of him was sweet; for now I have found him whom my Soul long thirsted after in *Egypt* Land: I say as I was meditating there was brought by the power of the Lord a perfect remembrance of my sore Travel in that dark Land of Bondage, now praises, praises to his great Name for ever, who hath sent Redemption to Israel, and set the oppressed free, and broken that heavy yoak, and laid on his yoak that is easie, and his burthen which is light. Now in bowels of tender love to those that know me by face and name in the outward, who hath been with me in many Trials, and yet are resting there still in that which will not stand in the day of the Lords power, when no covering will serve but the Spirit of the Lord; Now if you will but sink down to that which is pure of God, and see and feel your selves and me also, and let that of God judge of my Travels in *Egypt*, and the way from thence, as the Lord God by his mighty power shall give me to relate.

That the Truth of God may flourish, is the earnest desire of my Soul, & that he may be exalted above all; Therefore I shall relate a little of the

long ſuffering of the Lord, and how unwilling he is that ſinners ſhould periſh, and alſo to make known to you that it is the ſame God I now own that brought me out of my mothers-womb, and gave me life and all things.

Near about the time that I was ſeven years of age, being bred up by my Parents very exactly for refraining of groſs evils, as Swearing and Curſing and the like; I can truly ſay that there was a greater Power reſtrained me then their words, and many deſires were raiſed up in me to know that God they talked of ſo much, and ſo often prayed to, and when I often asked where he was, and how he muſt be ſerved, they ſaid he was in Heaven above the Skies, but I felt him near me, reproving me for my playing and wantonneſs, as Children do practice in that nature; and many a vow I made not to do ſo again, but my vows I did not keep until I came near to fourteen years of age, then was the Lord pleaſed to ſhew his power yet more in reproving me for ſports and pleaſure, to which I hearkned a little & did refrain it; yet there was ſomething in me luſted to ſee thoſe things acted which I could not do my ſelf; then I was judged for that alſo; then did I quite ſeparate my ſelf from my Companions which reproach't me, but I matter'd them not, and I went along with a little flock in *Leominſter*, called *Puretans*, and many a faſt day I kept very exactly, and with the ſufferer I took part; then began my Parents to hate me when I was got above them, & I denyed their formal prayers, and then they grew worſe, and many a blow I received upon that account which I bore patiently, and I can truly ſay I never repented my going, nor refrained, until Wars came in *England*; Then was the Flock of God ſcattered abroad as ſheep without a Shepherd, and hunted about like a Partridge on the Mountains, and many were killed with the Sword, and often put to the flight, which made me and others queſtion whether God had not forſaken his own People, becauſe he did not deliver them out of their enemies hands; then the enemies of the Lord did rejoice both within and without, as if all had been their own, then the Seed of God ſuffered in *Sodom* and *Egypt*, and the two Witneſſes were ſlain and were made merry over, and then the Seed ſuffered, and the ſeed of the Serpent got on the top, and led me captive at his will; Now take notice the ſame Light I now own, not another, did let me ſee my ſtate that I was run into darkneſs and departed from the Lord, and was in the broad way which leadeth to deſtruction; but ſometimes did many ſtrong cryes run through me, ſaying, O that I could but ſee the day I once ſaw; yea, when I have been ſetting up my ſelf in pride, or otherwiſe, I have wiſhed, O that I were in ſuch a condition I was once in, if I had not raggs to cover my nakedneſs; thus I paſſed on

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wilde and wanton until the wars were something abated, and Sectors were set up, and I heard many men, and they held many Opinions, I thought I was the worst amongst all, for I was ashamed of my present estate, however I left my Companions, and then I posted up and down after the most eminent men in those parts, for I soon saw the deceit of the Tithe Priests and denied them all, yet still I saw in my self I was condemned because I did not walk up to what I knew, though many branches were broken off, yet the root still remained, thus was I tossed from Mountain to Hill and hurried here and there, but none spake to my present estate until I met with one whose Name was known unto us by the Name of *James Brown*, who as I understand died an open enemy to the same Truth that he once declared, and to the same Light which he once bore Testimony, though this is a hard saying; but hearken a little and consider you that were with me at the first in that discovery of Water-Baptism, and feel what I say, this man was very low and tender, and had denied himself of all his honour and profit in the world, insomuch that he came to a low estate, yet I could not see but that he was contented while he was in that condition, could I see such an image born up amongst you as was once in him, I should own it as dear as my life; but feigned humility I deny, mark that, and for his Doctrine, it was the very same words which the Messengers of the Lord are gone forth with, and I in my measure do set my seal to, though at the first I did much oppose him, but my foundation could not stand, though got very high; as concerning the Light he spoke often of it, that it was the Light and Life of men, and that it shined in darkness, and that it was the true Light that lighteth every one that cometh into the World, and that the Word was within the Mouth and in the Heart, and that Christ was within, and he often prest it to me, that if Christ was not within me I was a Reprobate, the which I did believe it was the truth, and that my greatest enemies were within, I knew it was so; then the Serpent raged, and then were Wars and rumours of Wars such as never was before, the Sword of the Lord was drawn to cut down all his enemies, & the book was opened, & all that ever I had done was laid before me, and my Good and evil was all judged, I would have ran any way to have hid my self, or to any one, but I thought none was like me, thus was my condition several weeks together, I sought death in that day but I could not find it, *I* would fain have dyed but death fled from me, when day appeared *I* was afraid, and also of the night, many were the temptations to end my life, but there was a secret power kept me from it, and as *I* kept low *I* heard a voice cry, Just and Righteous are the Judgements of the Lord, and as *I* kept in, a hope of deliverance was

raiſed contrary to that Serpents voice, for he ſaid, it would never be otherwiſe, ſo yet *I* waited till ſome propheſies aroſe, that Sorrow ſhould endure for a Night, but Joy ſhould come in the Morning, and ſo it was, that as mine Enemies fell, my Soul rejoyced & my hard Heart was broken, and the Lamb got the Victory, and a precious condition *I* did enjoy, and then were the Scriptures pretious to me as *I* came to witneſs to them, and *Sion* was redeemed through judgement as it is at this day; Now this is to inform your mindes that no other Way do *I* own, no other Truth, no other Life, no other Rock, no other Refuge, no other hiding place in time of need then *I* owned at that day, my Judgement is the ſame, and my Guide my Teacher, and my Life is the ſame now; Why is this wonder both with Profeſſor and Prophane at my great change? It is nothing elſe but a woman that hath run after many Lovers, returned to her former Husband again: Now praiſes, praiſes to his great Name for ever, who did not ſhut up his Tender Compaſſion, nor Seal me up for the day of Deſtruction.

Come let us Reaſon together of former Experiences, though it will not be mentioned but to your ſorrow, and call to minde the Lords Doings; my Soul was never ſo poured forth with pitty towards you, nor laid ſo naked and bare before you, you that were with me in that diſcovery aforementioned, and many Revilings, Mocks, Scoffs & Reproaches did we bear together, and eſteemed them as great Riches; And did you not know a day of Suffering within you, and drank deep of the Cup of the Lords fury and indignation which you called trouble? And did you not know in ſome meaſure the Warfare, and a daily Croſs in the ſelf-denyal of your own Words, Wayes and Wills, to yea, and nay in your communication, and to few words, and did you not know a more purer Separation from the World then in Words, and Houſes? Sink down and digg deep in your earthly hearts and read me there; Did you not feed on daily bread in your Fathers houſe, and on the Tree of Life, whoſe Leaves healed the Nations? And did you not looſe that pretious eſtate by reaching out after the Tree of Knowledge, and labouring to know more in the Scriptures then your lives could witneſſe? Both Teachers and others, to that of God do I direct you, who ſhall Witneſs for me in the day of the Lords Power, and he that could ſpeak moſt and diſcourſe beſt was moſt eſteemed, and had forgotten the Antient Paths, and much proving our ſelves to be Saints, when our lives ſhewed before whoſe Servants we were, as *Saul* when the Spirit of the Lord was departed from him, *then honour me before the people*, when he had loſt the Honour that cometh from God, then the image of the Beaſt was ſet up whoſe head was of gold, and the falſe prophet, and he that would

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not bow unto them, muſt have no communion with us, and they got a cover to cover deceit, as Pride they called Decency, Coveteouſneſſe, Carefulneſſe and Saving, and Laughter they called rejoycing in the Lord, Fooliſh-jeſting and lying, and anger and Malice, they called Weakneſſe and Failings, Jangling about the meanings of Scriptures, they called Contending for the Faith; But really I could not own theſe things until I was Married, then the Branches that were broken off for many years began to ſprout again, and then was I ſhut out of that Scripture, there be Gods many and Lords many, but to us there is but one God, I durſt not read it, for the witneſſe of God in my Conſcience told me, that I did ſet up in my heart other things beſide the Lord, as Husband and other Riches which ſoon did fall, and now I ſet my Seal to the Apoſtles Words, that Covetouſneſſe is the Root of all evil, the ſame Light I now own did then ſhew me that I was in the Worlds Nature, and did Condemn me when none elſe did, for when things proſpered I could be merry, but when my Will was croſſed, anger and peeviſhneſſe grew up; I thought to cover my ſelf, ſaying, all others were in that eſtate, but that Covering was too narrow, though the Adminiſtration of Condemnation is Glorious in its time, yet another eſtate muſt be witneſſed before peace be witneſſed; When I was by my ſelf ſober I ſaw my eſtate, and that there was a great Gulf or a Cloud drawn between the Lord and I, but all this while who could accuſe me without; and often there was brought to a perfect remembrance my former pretious condition, I ſat by the Waters of *Babylon* when I remembred *Sion*, then I broke mine heart pouring out my Soul, ſaying, Curſed be the day that ever I taſted of that Fruit that was forbidden, yea I wiſh that my tongue had cloven to the Roof of my Mouth, rather then I ſhould have ſpoke of one Scripture that I could not witneſſe, yea it is a repentance never to be repented of; in this condemned eſtate I remained; Then I queſtioned my Faith, my hope and my Love, my Repentance, my Meat, Drink and Aparrel, though it was like to others who were called pretious Saints; I knew not what to do nor which way to take, ſometimes I ſaw the Gate of Mercy opened, but no way to enter but through Judgement, I was willing to wait therein, but when I felt it terrible with a mighty croſs to the will of the fleſh, then I would mind another thing; I heard a cry run through me, ſaying, their Servants you are to whom you obey, whether in obedience to Righteouſneſs or unrighteouſneſſe; I had no reſt, at laſt I replyed, Ah Lord, do I not keep all thy Commandments, he ſaid nay? I ſaid do I not ſerve thee with Truth of heart? The anſwer was, whom doſt thou ſerve when thou doſt evil; a man cannot ſerve two Maſters, and then my mouth was ſtopt, then I would ſhun thoſe thoughts; then was brought to remembrance how I had read many years before a of man that when ſad

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was in his heart, he would get some merry thing to drive them away, I had no rest, I heard of a people called *Quakers*, I enquired, as the manner of professors did, what was their Judgement, let never so much humility appear, the answer was, that the greatest professors in the Nation, were the greatest enemies to the Crosse of Christ; I do not justifie my self, for condemnation hath passed on all my good and evil actions, but I find very few professors walk so exactly as I did in those dayes concerning things without, though all this did not reach so far as the Scribes and Pharisees who were clean on the out side, I saw it to be so, though we called our selves the Saints of the Most High, yet I said in my self, if the Saints condition was thus, it was a miserable estate, I was weary and heavy laden, I went from meeting to meeting to find out one that was in my condition, all were full, and smoothed up one another with words and no Reformation; I durst not partake of their Bread and Wine, for I saw we were ignorant of the Lords Body, I was brought very low and to a waiting condition, what truth I heard declared I owned, and the rest I let alone and said little, waiting for the promise of the Lord to be fulfilled which I read of in the Scriptures, that the Lord would Teach his People himself; in this estate I remained almost a year, I loved to be by my self, for then I could pour out my Soul before the *Lord*, saying, Ah teach me the Way that I should go, and lead me in the Paths of Righteousnesse; Oh when shall I see the day of thy appearance in fulfilling thy promise which thou hast made of old? O why are thy Charret Wheels so long a coming; O shall I never see the day of deliverance? Thus my Soul groaned under a heavy burthen until I met with one of the Lords Messengers, and sore sufferers for the Testimony of Jesus, whose words struck deep through the Earth, and reacht to the witnesse of God, insomuch that I durst not speak a word against that thing that I once enjoyed; I owned his words, and spake against Professors, Priests and People, I denyed the Worlds words, Wayes, Fashions and Customs in a great measure, I became a reproach, a Proverb and a by-word unto the Countrey round about, and yet the Life of Truth I knew not, my Lovers and Acquaintance stood afar off me, my familiar friends were ashamed to own me, Professors they denied me, as *Philip Farmer* a Teacher of others did judge me much for denying the Rule, and stumbling at Strawes, and leaping over Blocks; and he affirmed that Jesus Christ did bid a woman God speed that was committing Adultery, and that he did bid a man God speed at Plow, and said, he would prove it by Scripture, and several lies more; Another Teacher judged me for denying the Ordinance, and he affirmed, though Bread was Bread at the Bakers, and Wine was Wine at the Vintners, yet when it came to them it was the Body and Blood of Christ. Friends, I do not write this out of any

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evil will that I bear to any mans perſon, the Lord is my witneſſe, but that Truth may appear, and that you may ſee who denied the Rule them or I, or who denied the coming of God, them or I, I did then denie the Rule that they walked by, for all ſuch actors are ſhut out of the Scriptures, though at that time I knew not the right hand from the left, though brought through that before mentioned; *I* would have taken up a reſt there, but the flaming Sword which turned every way cut me down, great were the ſights that I ſaw with mine Eyes, and that which I heard with mine Ears, one woe poured out after another, earth-quakes in divers places, this was but the beginning of ſorrows, the great and Red Sea before me, *Pharaoh* and his Hoſt behind me, and in that day I knew not God, I durſt not name his Name becauſe I was not departed from iniquity, I knew not what the firſt principle of Religion was, I feared leaſt any ſhould ask a reaſon of my Faith; I cried for the diſquietneſſe of my heart, I curſt the day and the hour my Mother brought me forth, and in that year I did witneſſe *Pharaoh* plagued with many plagues before he would let *Iſrael* go, I would have done any thing that was pleaſing in his ſight, but all was accurſed, nothing but Wars and rumours of Wars, many diſpairing thoughts entered into me, I was like one that went from a Lyon and a Bear met him, and leaned upon a wall, and a Serpent bit him, I was pleaded with by Sword and by Fire, yea the Fire burned all the day till I was almoſt conſumed, I went about like a Fool or like one deſtracted, yea if I had been to write but a Note of an outward thing, I could not compoſe it no more then a natural Fool, all my building was decayed, not one ſtone upon another that was not thrown down; I went mourning all the day like a woman that mourneth for her only Son, there was no eye pitied me, but then was the time of love, I heard a voice cry, agree with thy adverſarie quickly whilſt thou art in the way with him, for Judgement am I come into this World, that they which ſee not might ſee, and they which ſee might be made blind; Now praiſes, praiſes to his great Name for ever, who hath made a way in the deep Waters and path in the Sea, for his own Seed to paſſe over, and hath drowned *Pharaoh* and his great Hoſt, and overwhelmed them all, and delivered *Iſrael* out of many troubles, and hath turned and overturned till pure peace and joy is witneſſed in the Land, and I witneſſe his words, who ſaid a woman that is in Travel hath ſorrow becauſe her hour is come, but aſſoon as ſhe is delivered of her Child ſhe remembreth no more the anguiſh for joy; but only for your ſakes is the Father pleaſed to bring to remembrance, and I dare not be ſilent but declare what the Lord hath done for my ſoul, it may be thoſe that are in the Serpents Wiſdom will judge theſe things to be frothy empty things, but really

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it is that which you must all pass through if ever you come to witness a Restauration again, although you may create to your selves many rests, yet it is that which will not indure the fire seven times to be tried; My Friends, I know the thing, I call you Friends out of tender love and pitty that I bare to you, though I have not found you so, yet my love is dear to the Seed of God which is kept under in you. Whether you will hear or forbear I have cleared my Conscience, for I see *Satans* policy, if he can keep men and women from believing in the Light, then his kingdom stands sure, for the Light discovers his dark wayes and works, and leads the Creature out of them by degrees to an innocent estate and to a Holy Life.

Therefore retire your minds into that which shews you that you come too short of what you ought to be; You have been long sweeping without and hath not made it clean, now learn the Parable of the woman, and sweep the house, for verily there is no other place to find that which you have lost; Dig deep to find that Pearl of great price, and buy it though it cost you all you have, do not esteem the Light a low thing, call'd it natural; for verily if you will but wait in it, it will discover spiritual wickedness in high places, and shew you the secret intents of your hearts, this is that light which the Prophet prophesied of, which should lighten the *Gentiles*, and old *Simeon* and *Anna* rejoyced to see him that the Prophets prophesied of, this is the True Light which *John* bare witnesse of, and whosoever followed him should not abide in darkness, as he himself said, this is he which *Zacharias* prophesied of which should give Light to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, this is that Light which the Apostle *Peter* said *Shone in a dark place until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts*; Therefore take heed to it, this is he that searcheth the heart and trieth the Reins, and sheweth to man what is his thoughts, *Amos* 4. 13.

Thus have I in love to all your Souls written of the tender dealings of the Lord to my Soul, as a warning to you that you should no longer resist the loving kindnesse of the Lord.

THE END.

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